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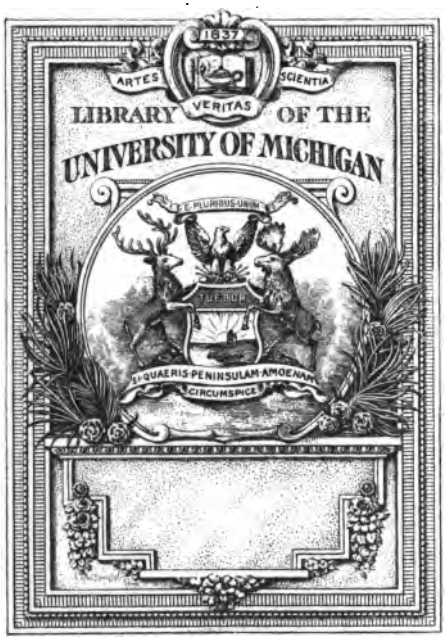
LIBRARY CLASSIFICATION

W. I. Fletcher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Library Classification

BY

W. I. FLETCHER, A.M.

LIBRARIAN OF AMHERST COLLEGE

Reprinted, with Alterations, Additions, and an Index from his "Public Libraries in America"

BOSTON

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1894

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INTRODUCTION

THERE are already in the field many rival schemes of classification for libraries. The present publication is not intended to add one to the number, but rather to offer a way of escape for those who shrink from the intricacies and difficulties of the elaborate systems, and to substitute for painstaking analytical classification a simple arrangement which it is believed is better adapted to be practically useful in a library, while doing away with most of the work involved in carrying out one of these schemes.

There is a certain fascination in the classifying of books, and many efforts have been made to provide a philosophical basis of classification. In EDWARDS'S *Memoirs of Libraries*,[1] a long chapter is devoted to this subject, treating it historically as well as practically, and a comparative exhibit of thirty-two different schemes of classification is given. Many of these are ingenious, and have been found to work fairly well in practice; but the demands of the modern library call for something different, and much more elaborate schemes have been worked up since the publication of

[1] EDWARDS, E., *Memoirs of Libraries*, *London*, 1859, 2 vols. 8vo. The reference is to vol. 2, pp. 759–831.

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EDWARDS's book. It is generally recognized that modern libraries need a more minute subdivision into classes than was common formerly, and the attempt has been made to meet this need by elaborate logical analysis. But this analytical work, while befitting a classified catalogue or bibliography, is at fault in the actual arrangement of books, for the reason that so many books are of a composite character and so lie across the lines of subdivision. It often happens that with one of these elaborate schemes a large library will have many classes vacant, and in many others only one or two books, while the reader on any of these topics must look to books inclusive of them, but not confined to them, for most of his information.

Classification, therefore, cannot avail to bring together into one place the material on a given minute topic, and yet, in libraries where much is made of classification, readers are constantly led to use it as a means of getting at the literature of a desired subject. For this purpose catalogues, bibliographies, and indexes must always be the main reliance. But if this is so, the main reason for making an elaborate classification is taken away, and it can readily be seen that the time and labor so lavishly expended on it in some libraries may better be devoted to providing more complete catalogues and bibliographical helps.

The object to be sought in library classification is simply to bring together, so far as can be done, the books on each particular subject, for the convenience of the attendants and of readers admitted to the shelves. In a purely circulating library the principal

use of classification is to facilitate the finding of the books, as readers, in placing numbers on their cards, are likely to select several of one kind, and in looking for them the attendant is saved time and trouble by having the library fairly well classified. So far as readers are admitted to the shelves, they also are greatly helped by finding the books on any subject together. But, as has already been intimated, the attempt, by classification, to make books catalogue themselves, — *i. e.*, to have the shelves show what the library has on a given subject, — must always be a failure, and, if dependence is placed upon it, must result in seriously narrowing and hampering the work of the reader or student, who should be referred to many sources of information on his subject which cannot be indicated by the classification.

Take, for example, the subjects of Taxation or Pauperism. It is well to have any two or three books the library may possess on either of these subjects stand together on a given shelf. But the reader is likely to find three-fourths of the most useful material on either of these subjects in general works on Political Economy, in articles in periodicals, and in various reports and encyclopædic works.

As public libraries are coming to be used more for study in connection with the schools, with university extension, etc., there is a growing tendency to thoroughness in cataloguing and bibliographical work, and an increasing number of indexes which render available the material in composite books. With the present marked progress in these directions, it is safe

to predict that the imperfect and unsatisfactory character of the provision made for literary research by any possible classification of books on the shelves, will be recognized, and classification will be relegated to its proper subordinate place as a practical detail of library work which can be sufficiently well done with very little expenditure of valuable time. The writer has heard no demand oftener than that for a simple classification adapted to the smallest libraries and satisfactory until they have grown much larger. The following may be offered as such a scheme: —

A. Fiction.
J. Juvenile books.
B. English and American literature.
C. History.
D. Biography.
E. Travels.
F. Science.
G. Useful arts.
H. Fine and recreative arts.
I. Political and social science.
K. Philosophy and religion.
L. Works on language and in foreign languages.
R. Reference books.

The books in each class separately are supposed to be numbered consecutively beginning with 1.

As the library increases, and some sections seem to require subdivision, it can easily be done by dividing the numbers in a class, — *e. g.*, assigning to ancient history numbers 1 to 100 in class C; to modern European

history, numbers 101 to 300; and to American history, 301 to 500, or by making more minute subdivisions, if necessary. By means of much less painstaking in this arrangement of numbers within the classes than is required to apply a more elaborate scheme of classification, a library can be satisfactorily cared for until it reaches 30,000 or possibly 50,000 volumes. If for any reason the library is to be specialized in one subject, room enough for that subject to expand indefinitely should be assigned, not only on the shelves, but also in the catalogue and classification. And the different classes of books will naturally be so placed in the room that those most in demand will be most convenient of access, and others in proportion. The order of classes given in the list above will be found applicable to the ordinary public library, beginning with A at the point nearest the delivery counter.

The list of classes which follows is offered as one likely to serve the purposes of an ordinary public library of not over 100,000 volumes, and competent for even a much larger one if expanded by subdivision as found necessary.

As intimated above, a small library may be numbered satisfactorily, with room for expansion, by simply numbering the books in each class consecutively, the classes being designated by capital letters prefixed to the numbers.

In a larger library, with more subdivisions, the classes will be numbered, and the class number prefixed to the book number, a period being placed between the two. In some classes, as in fiction and

in literature, the books should be arranged alphabetically by authors; in biography they are better arranged alphabetically by the subject, so that all lives of the same person will be together. Where there is an attempt to keep the books in these classes in strict alphabetic order, making all additions fall into it, the inserted books may receive a number with a letter added, 169 *a* following 169, 169 *b* following that, and 169 *aa* going between 169 *a* and 169 *b*. There are devices for designating books by marks other than numbers to secure this alphabetical arrangement, of which the Cutter author-table is best known and most used. But it is doubtful whether it is worth while, at any rate in more than a few classes, to attempt the alphabetical arrangement.

As with the simpler form of classification, further subdivisions may be effected in any class by dividing up the book numbers, and assigning a block of numbers to each subdivision, as described before. When the assigned numbers have been exhausted, they can be repeated with a letter added, there being thus a possibility of almost indefinite expansion. At the same time, in a library arranged on this principle, most of the books will have simple numbers, and the whole system of numbering will be much more satisfactory to the average reader than the complicated "notation" found with each of the more elaborate schemes of classification.

LIST OF CLASSES

It will be observed that these classes are given, not in a logical or philosophical order, but rather in a natural sequence under a few general headings. These are so arranged as to be most likely to fit the needs of an average public library: first fiction, then juveniles, being nearest the delivery desk; then literature and other classes in about the order of their precedence in the demands of the public.

Any one using this scheme should feel free to change the numbers or the order of the classes as may seem best to fit the needs of a particular case. The scheme is offered rather as a general guide than as something to be followed with absolute adherence to detail.

A few numbers have been omitted at the end of each general division, to provide for the insertion of additional classes; these may, however, be inserted at any point by giving them the number of the preceding class with a letter added.

Fiction.

No class number.	English and American in one class, arranged alphabetically by authors (anonymous works alphabetically by titles). Translations of foreign fiction also included.

Juvenile Books.

Use J. in place of a class number. { Including not simply stories, but all books calculated for young readers. Arranged alphabetically by authors, etc. as above.

English and American Literature; Universal Literature.

Class No.

1. Periodicals.
2. Miscellany and humor.
3. English authors (arranged alphabetically, with biographies and critical works on each author following his works).
4. American authors (arranged alphabetically, with biographies and critical works on each author following his works).
5. English literature; histories, etc.
6. " " collections.
7. American " histories.
8. " " collections.
9. Drama (Eng. and Amer.); histories and collections.
10. Poetry (Eng. and Amer.); histories and collections.
11. Fiction (Eng. and Amer.); histories and criticism.
12. Universal literature; history, etc.
13. Criticism; science and art of poetry, the drama, fiction, etc., (except works referring to the literature of a particular language.)

History.

Class No.

15. Philosophy and study of history.
16. History of civilization.
17. Historical essays and miscellanies.
18. Chronology.
19. Ancient history; general.
20. Oriental.
21. Egypt.
22. The Jews.
23. Greece.
24. Rome.
25. Middle Ages. The Crusades.
26. Europe, modern.
27. England and Great Britain; general.
28. England; before Norman conquest.
29. 1070 to 1600.
30. 17th century.
31. 18th and 19th centuries.
32. Scotland and Wales.
33. Ireland.
34. France; general.
35. Before the Revolution.
36. Revolution and to 1815.
37. Since 1815.
38. Germany. The Netherlands. Belgium.
39. Austria and Hungary. Switzerland. The Danubian and Balkan States.
40. Italy.
41. Spain and Portugal.
42. Greece and Turkey.
43. Russia. Poland.

History (*Continued*).

Class No.

44. Scandinavia.
45. America in general.
46. Discovery and early voyages.
47. Indians.
48. North America; general.
49. United States "
50. Colonial period.
51. Revolution. Also 1789–1812.
52. War of 1812 and to 1860.
53. Civil war.
54. Later history.
55. New England.
56. Maine.
57. New Hampshire.
58. Vermont
59. Massachusetts.
60. Connecticut.
61. Rhode Island.

This arrangement is suggested for a library in New England. Elsewhere other States would be given specifically.

62. Middle States.
63. Southern States.
64. Western States.
65. Pacific slope. Alaska.
66. Canada. British America.
67. Mexico. Central America. West Indies.
68. South America.
69. Asia; general.
70. Persia, Arabia, etc.
71. India.
72. China and Japan.
73. Africa; general.
74. Egypt, modern.
75. Australia and other islands.

Biography.

Class No.

81. Collective works.
82. Individual biographies (arranged alphabetically by names of persons written about, rather than by authors).

Voyages and Travels. Geography.

85. Descriptive geography. Atlases. Maps.
86. Art of travel, etc.
87. Voyages; collections.
88. Travels around the world, etc.
89. North America.
90. United States.
91. New England.
92. Middle States.
93. Southern States.
94. Western States.
95. Pacific slope. Alaska.
96. Canada. British America.
97. Mexico. Central America. W. Indies.
98. South America.
99. Europe; general.
100. Great Britain.
101. France. Spain and Portugal.
102. Germany. Austria. Netherlands.
103. Italy. Switzerland.
104. Greece and Turkey.
105. Russia. Poland.
106. Scandinavia. Iceland.
107. Asia; general.
108. Syria and Palestine. Asia Minor.
109. Persia, Arabia, etc.

Travels (*Continued*).

Class No.

110. India.
111. China. Corea. Japan.
112. Central Asia. Siberia.
113. Africa.
114. Northern Africa and the Desert.
115. Egypt. The Soudan. The Nile.
116. Abyssinia. Madagascar.
117. Central and Southern Africa.
118. Australia and Polynesia.
119. Polar regions.
120. Islands.

Sciences.

125. History and philosophy of the sciences.
126. Scientific societies and academies. Periodicals.
127. Essays and miscellanies.
128. Evolution and cosmology.
129. Natural history (works combining zoölogy, botany, etc.).
130. Biology and embryology.
131. Comparative anatomy and physiology.
132. Zoölogy.
133. Lowest forms of animal life.
134. Mollusca. Insects.
135. Fishes.
136. Reptiles.
137. Birds.
138. Mammalia.
139. Man. Anthropology, ethnology, etc.
140. Botany; general.
141. Cryptogamia.
142. Of countries and localities.

Sciences (*Continued*).

Class No.

143. Geology: general works.
144. Of countries and localities.
145. Mineralogy and crystallography.
146. Chemistry; general.
147. Inorganic.
148. Organic.
149. Analysis. Text-books.
150. Physics.
151. Heat.
152. Light. Optics.
153. Electricity.
154. Telegraph and telephone. Phonograph.
155. Electric lighting.
156. Electro-dynamics.
157. Sound.
158. Hydraulics.
159. Mechanics.
160. Physical geography.
161. Meteorology.
162. Astronomy; general.
163. Descriptive.
164. Practical.
165. Almanacs (not statistical).
166. Mathematical sciences: general.
167. Arithmetic. Book-keeping.
168. Algebra.
169. Geometry.
170. Higher mathematics.
171. Geodesy and surveying.
172. Navigation.

Useful Arts.

Class No.

179. Useful arts: general.
180. Patents. Exhibitions.
181. Mechanics. Philosophy of machinery.
182. Properties of materials.
183. Mechanical drawing.
184. Hydro-mechanics. Aeronautics.
185. Steam and the steam engine.
186. Marine engineering. Steam navigation.
187. The locomotive. Railroads. Street railroads.
188. Electrical engineering.
189. Civil engineering.
190. Military art and science.
191. Drainage and sewerage.
192. Water supply.
193. Burial of the dead. Cremation.
194. Bridge building.
195. Precious metals.
196. Iron and steel; other metals.
197. Mining. Smelting.
198. Coal. Oil. Fuels.
199. Manufactures from metals.
200. Wood.
201. Textile. Production of cotton, wool, etc.
202. Dyeing, etc.
203. Chemical technology.
204. Silk culture and manufacture.
205. Carpentry and woodwork. Building.
206. Masonry and brickwork.
207. Plumbing and house sanitation.
208. Warming and ventilation.
209. Constructive arts and trades, not otherwise specified.

Useful Arts (*Continued*).

Class No.

210. Shipbuilding. Naval science.
211. Clocks, watches, etc. Scientific instruments.
212. Weights, measures, and coinage.
213. Writing. Phonography. Type-writing, etc. Business forms.
214. Printing. Bookbinding.
215. Mechanic arts not already specified.
216. Domestic economy.
217. Cookery and foods.
218. Hygiene. Public health.
219. Physical culture. Athletics.
220. Outdoor sports: general.
221. Hunting and fishing.
222. Boating.
223. Cycling.
224. Horse-racing. The horse. Veterinary science.
225. The dog. Falconry, etc.
226. Poultry. Pigeons. Pet animals.
227. Human anatomy and physiology.
228. Medicine; general.
229. Practical.
230. Nursing.
231. Agriculture; general.
232. Domestic animals. The dairy.
233. Care of lands. Agricultural drainage.
234. Forestry and hydrology.
235. Landscape gardening. Parks. Cemeteries.
236. Crops and their treatment.
237. Horticulture.
238. Floriculture.
239. Special products; honey, sugar, tobacco, etc.
240. Fisheries; sea products.

Fine Arts, etc.

Class No.

245. History, philosophy, and study of the fine arts.
246. Æsthetics.
247. Archæology.
248. Painting; history and general works.
249. Italian school.
250. Other continental schools.
251. British and American.
252. Practical works.
253. Galleries and collections.
254. Sculpture; general and modern.
255. Ancient.
256. Monumental art. Inscriptions.
257. Numismatics.
258. Bronzes. Bric-à-brac.
259. Pottery and porcelain.
260. Architecture; general.
261. Ancient.
262. Mediæval and modern.
263. Practical works.
264. Decoration and ornament.
265. Drawing and design.
266. Art needlework, etc. Costume.
267. Illumination, alphabets, etc.
268. Engraving.
269. Collections of engravings, photographs, etc.
270. Photography.
271. Music; history and general works.
272. Instruments.
273. Singing. The voice.
274. Elocution and oratory.
275. Selections for recitation, etc.

Fine Arts, etc. (*Continued*).

Class No.

276. Indoor amusements.
277. Games.

Political and Social.

279. Political science; general. Government.
280. Collected works of statesmen.
281. Freedom and democracy.
282. Suffrage and representation.
283. Administration. Civil service.
284. Municipal government.
285. Taxation. Public funds and debts.
286. Protection and free trade.
287. English constitution and government.
288. Other governments, outside of the United States.
289. United States government.
290. Slavery and secession. The negroes.
291. Indians and the United States.
292. Immigration. Foreign element.
293. Temperance in politics.
294. Public lands.
295. United States finances.
296. Foreign relations.
297. Party politics. Presidential elections.
298. Congress.
299. Public documents; United States and States.
300. Law; general.
301. International law.
302. Common law; text-books. Law reports.
303. Criminal law and trials.
304. Law of patents and copyright.
305. Statutes.

Political and Social (*Continued*).

Class No.

306. Political economy.
307. Land and its tenure.
308. Labor and wages. Prices. Coöperation.
309. Trade unions.
310. Capital and investments. Interest.
311. Finance and banking. Money.
312. Corporations. Monopolies.
313. Socialism. Communism.
314. Population.
315. Marriage and divorce. The family.
316. Woman question.
317. Pauperism.
318. Public charities and corrections.
319. Prisons. Reformatories.
320. Crime.
321. Children, destitute and criminal.
322. Asylums.
323. Deaf and dumb, blind, idiots, etc.
324. Insanity and insane asylums.
325. Relief associations. Building societies.
326. Freemasons.
327. Other secret societies.
328. Clubs, etc.
329. Insurance.
330. Education; history, philosophy, etc.
331. Organization and superintendence.
332. Teaching and accessory work.
333. School discipline, buildings, and hygiene.
334. Kindergarten; child-culture.
335. Education of women.
336. Classical studies; collegiate education.
337. Technical and industrial training.

Political and Social (*Continued*).

Class No.

338. Professional training.
339. Educational institutions.
340. Chautauqua. Home culture. Summer schools. University extension.
341. Education in relation to religion and morals.
342. Statistics; methods, etc. Census reports.
343. Almanacs and annuals.
344. Other statistical works.
345. Commerce, general.
346. Of the United States.
347. Of other countries.
348. Internal commerce. Railroad transportation. Local transit.
349. Water transportation, canals, etc.
350. Post-office; telegraph and telephone.

Philosophy and Religion.

352. Philosophy; history, etc.
353. General works. Systems, etc.
354. Miscellanies.
355. Metaphysics.
356. Logic.
357. Psychology.
358. The will.
359. Memory.
360. Sleep, dreams, somnambulism.
361. Mesmerism. Psychical research.
362. Spiritualism, magic, witchcraft, etc.
363. Phrenology and physiognomy.
364. Moral philosophy.
365. Practical morals; general.

Philosophy and Religion (*Continued*).

Class No.

366. Temperance, tobacco, etc.
367. Amusements, Ethics of.
368. Manners and customs.
369. Minor morals, etiquette.
370. Religion and theology; history and philosophy.
371. Natural theology. Science and religion. Evidences.
372. Miracles. Prayer.
373. Mythology; general.
374. Scandinavian and northern.
375. The Bible, whole or parts.
376. Inspiration, interpretation, authority, etc.
377. Concordances, dictionaries, illustrative works.
378. Commentaries; whole Bible.
379. Old Testament and parts thereof.
380. New " " "
381. Judaism.
382. Christian theology, general and historical.
383. Jesus Christ, the atonement, etc.
384. Death and the future state.
385. Other doctrines.
386. Sermons and didactic works.
387. Devotional books. Sunday-school books.
388. The church; general.
389. Ecclesiastical history.
390. Greek church.
391. Roman Catholic church.
392. The Reformation.
393. Protestantism.
394. Toleration and persecution; religious liberty.
395. Church of England and Episcopal church.
396. Methodist Episcopal denomination.

Philosophy and Religion (*Continued*).

Class No.

397. Baptist denomination.
398. Presbyterian denomination.
399. Congregational denomination.
400. Unitarian and Universalist denominations.
401. Other Christian denominations.
402. The Sabbath.
403. Public worship. Private and family worship.
404. Sacraments.
405. Preaching.
406. Hymnology and church music.
407. The Sunday school; church accessories.
408. Missions; general and foreign.
409. Home.
410. City.
411. Y. M. C. A. and similar organizations.
412. Mohammedanism.
413. Buddhism and other Oriental religions.
414. Heathenism.
415. Mormons, Shakers, etc.
416. Free thought. Rationalism. Positivism.

Language and Literature.

(English and American Literatures and Universal Literature excepted.)

421. Science of language.
422. Comparative philology.
423. Indo-European languages.
424. Other families of speech (not elsewhere specified).
425. Folk-lore and popular antiquities.
426. Proverbs.

Language and Literature (*Continued*).

Class No.

427. Myths and romances.
428. Classical languages and literature; general.
429. Greek language, text-books, etc.
430. Greek authors.
431. Latin language, text-books, etc.
432. Latin authors.
433. English language, general.
434. Gothic, Anglo-Saxon, and early English; text-books, also literature.
435. English grammar, usage and spelling.
436. English composition. Rhetoric (English and other).
437. English dictionaries, synonymy, etc.
438. English dialects. Americanisms.
439. French language; text-books, etc.
440. French literature; histories, collections, etc.
441. French authors.
442. German language; text-books, etc.
443. German literature; histories, etc.
444. German authors.
445. Italian language and literature.
446. Italian authors.
447. Spanish and Portuguese languages and literatures.
448. Spanish and Portuguese authors.
449. Scandinavian languages and literatures.
450. Scandinavian authors.
451. Other European languages and literatures.
452. Sanskrit and other Indian languages and literatures.
453. Semitic languages and literatures.
454. Chinese and Japanese languages and literatures.

Language and Literature (*Continued*).

Class No.

455. African languages and literatures.
456. American Indian languages and literatures.

Reference-books and Special Classes.

(In librarian's room and delivery room.)

461. Library economy.
462. Bibliography.
463. Manuscripts and rarities.
464. Catalogues of libraries.
465. National and trade bibliography.

(In reading-room or reference-room.)

466. Cyclopædias; ordinary reference books.
467. Newspaper files.
468. Pamphlets.

NOTE.—Classes numbered 461 to 468 will naturally be differently treated according to circumstances. The arrangement and numbering here given are merely suggestions.

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